

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ACDA-10 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-02 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 AEC-07 AID-05 CEA-01

CIEP-02 COME-00 EB-07 FEAE-00 FPC-01 INT-05 OMB-01

SAM-01 OES-05 STR-04 TRSE-00 FRB-01 SAB-01 /101 W

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FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 1279

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DEPARTMENT FOR NEA/EGY

EO 11652: NA

TAGS: PFOR EG US

SUBJ: ABU AL MAGD'S PRESS CONFERENCE: REMARKS ON BUSINESS
WEEK INTERVIEW

REF: MAESTRONE-MATTHEWS TELECON OF JAN 8

1. ACCORDING TO ACCOUNTS IN LOCAL PRESS, MININFO ABU AL-MAGD
MADE FOLLOWING COMMENTS ABOUT SECRETARY'S BUSINESS WEEK INTERVIEW
DURING FORMER'S
PRESS CONFERENCE JAN 7.

2. ABU AL-MAGD SAID RECENT REMARKS BY SECRETARY ON POSSIBILITY OF
USE OF FORCE AGAINST OIL-PRODUCING STATES ARE COUNTERPRODUCTIVE
AND DO NOT FURTHER RELATIONS BETWEEN THE US AND THE ARAB COUNTRIES.
"WE FAIL TO UNDERSTAND THE NEED OR THE TIMING FOR SUCH A STATEMENT,
TO SAY NOTHING OF OUR MANY QUESTIONS ON THE MERITS OF THE
CONTENTS OF THE STATEMENT." EGYPT IS IN FULL AGREEMENT WITH
BOUMEDIENNE'S DECLARATION THAT AGGRESSION AGAINST ONE ARAB
STATE WOULD BE CONSIDERED AGGRESSION AGAINST THE ENTIRE ARAB WORLD.

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3. ABU AL-MAGD REPORTEDLY WENT ON TO "QUESTION" WHETHER MILITARY ACTION WAS NECESSARY IN WHAT HE SAID WAS ESSENTIALLY AN ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL MATTER.

4. RETURNING TO SUBJECT LATER IN PRESS CONFERENCE, MININFO POINTED OUT THAT EGYPT IS NOT OIL-EXPORTING COUNTRY. GOE FOLLOWS POLICY OF NOT RPT NOT ENGAGING IN POLEMICS AND HAS BEEN CAREFUL NOT TO JEOPARDIZE RELATIONS WITH US. SUCH STATEMENTS AS THE SECRETARY'S ARE NOT IN LINE WITH PRESENT AMERICAN POLICY, AND HE WONDERED HOW THEY CAN SERVE CAUSES OF PEACE IN AREA, DETENTE BETWEEN THE TWO SUPER POWERS, OR WORLD PEACE. HE THEN REPORTEDLY EXPRESSED SURPRISE THAT THREATS TO USE FORCE WERE MADE PRIOR TO CONSIDERATION OF SUCH OTHER ALTERNATIVES AS NEGOTIATIONS. THE THREAT OF FORCE "WAS AN EXTREME ANSWER TO AN EXTREME POSSIBILITY."(SIC)

5. EACH NEWSPAPER REPORTS MINISTER'S REMARKS SLIGHTLY DIFFERENTLY, (IN EGYPT, REPORTERS USUALLY DO NOT USE TAPE RECORDERS, BUT TAKE NOTES IN SHORTHAND). ACCOUNT ABOVE IS TAKEN FROM ENGLISH LANGUAGE EGYPTIAN GAZETTE. AHRAH QUOTES MINISTER AS SAYING SECRETARY'S STATEMENTS DO NOT SERVE EFFORTS BEING EXERTED TO IMPROVE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE ARABS AND US, NOR DO THEY SERVE CAUSE OF PEACE IN THE AREA. THERE IS "NO NECESSITY" FOR SUCH STATEMENTS WHICH ARE UNJUSTIFIED AND THEREFORE UNACCEPTABLE, AND ALSO UNTIMELY. EILTS

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